



Transit Options

Fall 2005

Providing employers with smart commute solutions for their employees.



PRODUCTS FOR YOUR COMMUTERS

Give your commuters a Pre-tax benefit

New On-line Tool Kit shows you everything you need from forms to posters to e-mail messages for employees.

We know one thing for sure...most employees consider their commute to work part of their job. If their commute is a hassle, it can affect morale, productivity, even a decision to quit or stay. With soaring gas prices and serious congestion there is a simple, low-cost way to give your employees a break. It's the IRS Section 132(f) pre-tax commuter benefit.



A sentence containing both "IRS" and "tax" could make your eyes roll. But we have a new tool kit online to help you. And it isn't hard to do.

Here's how a pre-tax benefit works: your company can allow employees to pay part or all of the cost of public transportation (i.e. bus passes, ferry passes, vanpool fares) through payroll deduction before payroll taxes are deducted. If you have even a single employee buying a bus pass, you can give them this chance to reduce costs. It can save an employee hundreds of dollars a year and is as good as a raise – some would say better

since no taxes are paid on the amount (up to \$105/month per employee).

So unless you already give your employees a pretty good subsidy for commuting and/or already allow them to pay their share through a pre-tax deduction, help them take advantage of this IRS allowance. They can't do it without you.

Do this for your employees and your company will benefit too. Check out the Pre-Tax Tool Kit on-line. Go to <http://transit.metrokc.gov/> then choose 'Programs', 'Employer' and 'Tax Benefits'. Or check the mail-in card below and we'll send you the 'how to' booklet.

Pre-tax Workshop

Thursday, November 17, 2005

9–11am

Rainier Tower, downtown Seattle

Let us show you how and why to set up a pre-tax program for your employees. Free to companies with a Metro consignment account, \$42 for others. Sign up at:

<http://transit.metrokc.gov/prog/employer/emp-taxworkshopform.html>

IN THE NEWS

Gas prices give boost to sharing a ride

As the price of gas soars, so too does interest in vanpools, carpools and other forms of ridesharing.

According to figures from King County's *RideShareOnline.com*, nearly 10,000 people had signed up for Metro's ridematch program by August 2005. That's almost 1,000 more than July and more than 3,000 than August of 2004.

In a survey conducted in August, of 1,163 new ridematch users, 15% said they wanted to save energy or help the environment, but 30% said they wanted to offset the cost of gas. Sharing a ride can do that.

Guide To A Cheaper Commute

Here are a couple of helpful websites to put in an e-mail to your employees.

To figure out how much you can save by joining a carpool or vanpool, or taking the bus rather than driving alone in your car, check out Bellevue's online Commute Cost Calculator at:

http://onelesscarbellevue.org/sub/com_costcalc.shtml. Metro's online commute calculator (driving vs: taking the bus) is at:

<http://transit.metrokc.gov/tops/bus/calculator.html>

For information on Metro's vanpool and carpool program, visit: www.RideshareOnline.com

Company

Contact name

Position/Department

Address

City/State/Zip

Phone

Fax

E-mail address

Number of employees at your company

Yes, please send these FREE materials so our employees can learn about their commuting choices:

- ☐ Posters (two)
- ☐ King County Metro transit system map
- ☐ Carpool, Vanpool & Vanshare Materials
- ☐ Choosing the right bus pass product to give or sell to employees.
- ☐ Pre-tax Commuter Benefits – get going in 5 easy steps
- ☐ Commute Solutions booklet
- ☐ Past two issues of Transit Options newsletter

Our company offers the following commute benefits:

- ☐ None ☐ Bus passes at work ☐ Pre-tax payroll deductions for employees
- ☐ Employer-paid benefit of \$ _____ ☐ Free parking
- ☐ We'd like to give employees better commute options. Please have someone call me to discuss options and opportunities for starting or enhancing a commute program.



CTR Services, YES-TR-0650
400 Yesler Way
Seattle, WA 98104-2683

- Please route to:**
- ☐ General Manager
 - ☐ Human Resources
 - ☐ Payroll



Transportation Resouces

- Metro Online:**
<http://transit.metrokc.gov>
- Employer commute services:**
<http://transit.metrokc.gov>
Select 'Programs' then 'Employer Commute Services' or 206-263-3455
- Carpool, vanpool & vanshare services**
www.RideshareOnline.com
206-625-4500 or 800-427-8249
- Bus pass & ticketbook purchases**
<http://transit.metrokc.gov> or 206-624-PASS

Other Transportation Agencies

- Community Transit**
www.commtrans.org or 800-562-1375
- Kitsap Transit**
www.kitsaptransit.org
360-373-2877 or 800-501-RIDE
- Pierce Transit**
www.ptbus.pierce.wa.us
253-581-8000 or 800-562-8109
- Sound Transit**
www.soundtransit.org or 206-398-5000
- Washington State Ferries**
www.wsdot.wa.gov/ferries
206-464-6400 or 888-808-7977
- Flexcar**
www.flexcar.com or 206-391-8825

Contact Information

Employer Program Information:

Gayle Delanty 206-263-3455
gayle.delanty@metrokc.gov

Dave Hollar 206-263-3492
dave.hollar@metrokc.gov

Transit Options is published 3 times a year by the Product Sales Group at Metro Transit's Commute Trip Reduction Services to provide employers with the information needed to offer commute assistance to employees.

An electronic version of this newsletter is available at the Employer Commute Services website--see left.



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IF MAILED
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